

ACTION EAP-00
INFO LOG-00 AID-00 AMAD-00 ACQ-00 CIAE-00 INL-00 DOEE-00
DOTE-00 WHA-00 PERC-00 DS-00 EB-00 EUR-00 FAAE-00
FBIE-00 VCI-00 H-00 TEDE-00 INR-00 INSE-00 IO-00
LAB-01 L-00 CAC-00 M-00 VCIE-00 DCP-00 NRC-00
NRRC-00 NSAE-00 ISN-00 NSCE-00 OCS-00 OES-00 OIC-00
OIG-00 OMB-00 NIMA-00 PA-00 PM-00 GIWI-00 PRS-00
P-00 SCT-00 ISNE-00 DOHS-00 FMPC-00 SP-00 IRM-00
SSO-00 SS-00 T-00 BBG-00 R-00 IIP-00 SSD-00
PMB-00 DSCC-00 PRM-00 DRL-00 G-00 CARC-00 SAS-00
SWCI-00 /001W

-----EED599 052153Z /38

O 052147Z JUL 06
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5229
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL MELBOURNE IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL PERTH IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL SYDNEY IMMEDIATE
CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
USSTRATCOM OFFUTT AFB NE IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 001009

NOFORN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/05/2021

TAGS: [PARM](#) [MNUC](#) [MOPS](#) [KNNP](#) [MARR](#) [AS](#) [KN](#)

SUBJECT: DPRK: AUSTRALIAN REACTION TO JULY 5 NORTH KOREAN
MISSILE LAUNCH

REF: A. LAKDHIR-MATTHEWS E-MAIL OF 5 JULY 2006

[1](#)B. CANBERRA 929

[1](#)C. STATE 98659

Classified By: CDA Michael P. Owens, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).
SUMMARY

CONFIDENTIAL 2 of 8
CONFIDENTIAL 2 of 8

[1](#)1. (C/NF) Australian Prime Minister John Howard and Foreign Minister Alexander Downer issued separate statements to local media on July 5 publicly condemning the North Korean Taepo Dong-2 missile launch and calling on the DPRK to return to the Six-Party Talks. The Foreign Minister's media statement also pledged Australia's full support for "robust international action" in response to the DPRK's "provocative act," including at the United Nations, and announced Australia would further restrict travel to Australia by DPRK officials, cancel a planned visit to North Korea by a senior GOA official, and send GOA delegations to Washington and other capitals to coordinate an international response. In a further reaction to the missile launch, Foreign Minister Downer telephoned the DPRK Ambassador on July 5 with a strongly-worded protest. The DPRK Ambassador responded along familiar lines, accusing the United States of "insincerity" and asserting North Korea's sovereign right to protect itself, including the right to launch missiles. End Summary.
[1](#)2. (U) Australia acted quickly to condemn North Korea's July 5 launch of a Taepo Dong-2 long-range intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and other short-range missiles. In two separate radio interviews on July 5, Prime Minister Howard said Australia was "very concerned" about North

Korea's "extremely provocative act", and called on North Korea to return immediately to the Six-Party Talks. He invited condemnation of the DPRK's missile launch by other six-party members. Prime Minister Howard, who had raised Australian concerns about DPRK launch preparations with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on June 28 in Beijing, said North Korean actions were in "total breach of international obligations" and that they ran counter to North Korea's interests as well as regional interests. Howard said Australia wanted the issue to be settled diplomatically and urged all parties, particularly Japan and China, to pressure North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions.

13. (C/NF) Foreign Minister Downer, who was visiting Adelaide when news of the North Korean missile launch broke, telephoned DPRK Ambassador to Australia Jae Hong Chon to protest the launch and to register Australia's "grave concerns at North Korea's provocative action," according to Alice Cawte, Acting First Assistant Secretary of the North Asia Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Cawte, who was joined by Northeast Asia Branch Assistant Secretary Thomas Connor, said FM Downer told Ambassador Chon that DPRK's actions would further isolate North Korea and called for North Korea to return to the Six-Party Talks without delay. FM Downer used most of the points DFAT prepared for him in his telephone conversation

CONFIDENTIAL 3 of 8

CONFIDENTIAL 3 of 8

with Ambassador Chon, which he also used in his media release (para 6) and with the press (see para 7 below), although he omitted a final point stating Australia's intention to continue humanitarian aid despite the missile launch.

14. (C/NF) Cawte and Connor said that Ambassador Chon responded that the launch was a military matter that had not been briefed to him in advance. He went on, however, to press familiar complaints, accusing the United States of "insincerity" and reiterating North Korea's sovereign right to launch missiles and to do what was needed to protect itself. Cawte said FM Downer replied that the DPRK's action were not so much a matter of legal obligations but rather of the DPRK living up to its commitments, as expressed in its self-imposed 1999 moratorium on missile testing and the September 19, 2005 Statement of Principles.

15. (U) Foreign Minister Downer later issued a media statement (see full text in para 6 below) strongly condemning the Taepo Dong-2 ICBM launch and calling on the DPRK to return to the Six-Party Talks. In it, FM Downer pledged Australia would give its full support to "robust international action" in response to the DPRK's "provocative act" and announced Australia would further restrict travel to Australia by DPRK officials, cancel a planned visit to North Korea by a senior official, and send GOA delegations to Washington and other capitals to coordinate an international response. (Note: DFAT officials explained that North Asia Division First Assistant Secretary Peter Baxter, en route to the United States for previously scheduled consultations constituted the Australian "delegation" to the United States. End note.) FM Downer added in two subsequent interviews that Australia was "very angry" North Korea had launched a Taepo Dong-2 ICBM and other missiles, which had breached the 1999 moratorium on ballistic missile testing and reneged on the September 19, 2005 Statement of Principles. Downer told the press that he had earlier urged the United States to take the issue of the DPRK's missile launch preparations to the UN Security Council. In response to a press question, Downer dismissed the likelihood that the United States would consider a pre-emptive strike on nuclear facilities within North Korea.

16. (U) Below is the text of the July 5, 2006 media release from Foreign Minister Downer.

Begin text:

5 July 2006

MEDIA RELEASE: DPRK LONG RANGE MISSILE TEST

CONFIDENTIAL 4 of 8

CONFIDENTIAL 4 of 8

Australia strongly condemns the test launch of a Taepo Dong-2 long range intercontinental ballistic missile by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on 5 July. The DPRK also test-fired four short-range missiles. I have

expressed deep disappointment to the DPRK Ambassador today about these developments, which cast serious doubt over the DPRK's genuine willingness to engage the international community and to resolve the nuclear issue. The missile test has placed additional strain on an already deadlocked six-party process, and undermined rather than enhanced the DPRK's security.

The Taepo Dong-2 test runs counter to the DPRK's 1999 self-imposed moratorium on ballistic missile testing and to the Statement of Principles, signed by the DPRK on 19 September 2005. It shows North Korea does not honour its commitments. A DPRK ICBM capability poses a serious threat to the security situation in Northeast Asia and more broadly. In addition, we are deeply concerned that the DPRK conducted its missile tests in an atmosphere of secrecy without the notification that other countries routinely provide. I call on the DPRK to refrain from any further provocations and return to the six-party talks immediately and unconditionally.

I am deeply troubled that the DPRK is devoting its national resources to developing long-range ballistic missiles at a time when its humanitarian situation is dire.

In response to the DPRK's provocative act Australia will give full support to robust international action, including at the United Nations. We will also further restrict travel to Australia by DPRK officials and cancel a planned visit to North Korea by a senior Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade officer.

We will also send a delegation to Washington and regional capitals to discuss appropriate mechanisms through which to coordinate an international response.

Australia stood with the US, Japan, the EU and Canada at the 22-23 June meeting of the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation in issuing strong national statements against a long-range missile test.

Australia has played an active role in the prevention of missile proliferation in the region and further afield. We

CONFIDENTIAL 5 of 8

CONFIDENTIAL 5 of 8

are an active member of the Missile Technology Control Regime which seeks to prevent such proliferation by means of harmonised export licensing arrangements among the Regime's member states.

End text.

17. (U) Below is the text of Foreign Minister Downer's press interview given immediately following his telephone call to DPRK Ambassador Chon.

Begin text:

TRANSCRIPTION: PROOF Copy E & OE

DATE: 5 July 2006

TITLE: Doorstop, Adelaide

MR DOWNER: Let me just say in relation to the decision by the North Korean Government to conduct missile launching - first of all, we strongly condemn the decision by the North Korean Government to launch missiles. We believe that there have now been six missiles launched, five of those short range missiles, one of them we believe to be a long-range intercontinental ballistic missile, the launch of which was unsuccessful. But this decision by the North Koreans to launch these missiles is in contradiction of the stated position of the North Korean Government, going back to 1999 when they brought in a self-imposed moratorium on missile testing and the agreement they signed in 2005 on principles for peace and security in North Asia - an agreement signed with the other five parties of the Six-party talks.

I've spoken to the North Korean Ambassador myself this morning. I told the North Korean Ambassador that we condemn the testing of the missiles, that it did very much heighten concerns about the security of North Asia, particularly bearing in mind that North Korea was apparently testing long-range missiles, and that it was a country that was developing nuclear weapons. So this is of particular concern, obviously to countries in North Asia, not least Japan, but it's of grave concern to us as well as part of the region. Naturally enough it's of great concern to countries like the United States.

I have also spoken to our Ambassador in Washington who in turn has spoken to the Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice

and through our Ambassador, made it clear to the Secretary of State that it's our view that the United States should take

CONFIDENTIAL 6 of 8

CONFIDENTIAL 6 of 8

this matter to the United Nations Security Council. This is a challenge to international peace and security and it is a matter that should be discussed and considered by the Security Council itself. I understand the Americans are positive about taking this matter to the Security Council, I think it's very likely that they will, but in any case, we've made it clear to the Americans that it's our view that this is a matter that should be taken to the Security Council

JOURNALIST: Could the missile range actually encompass

Australia and is that missile nuclear capable?

MR DOWNER: We don't know the extent to which the Taepo Dong-2 missile, at this stage, could be nuclear weaponised. But obviously in theory it could be, whether they have the capacity to do that right now is rather an open question. According to intelligence estimates, the Taepo Dong-2, which is an intercontinental ballistic missile, has a range of several thousand kilometres and it would have the capacity to travel to Australia - not of course that I am suggesting that North Korea launching this missile is targeting Australia, that wouldn't be right. But nevertheless, this is the point - here is a country with a government which is a government, if I may say so, of very great concern - a country with scant regard for human rights which has developed a nuclear weapons programme in defiance of its obligations under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty from which it has withdrawn. And now is testing long-range missiles - intercontinental ballistic missiles. Understandably, the international community as a whole is very concerned about this and Australia will certainly not be alone in its condemnation of what the North Koreans have done.

JOURNALIST: Have you spoken to the (Inaudible) government at all or their representatives?

MR DOWNER: I have spoken to their Ambassador, I have spoken to the North Korean Ambassador myself this morning. Obviously because I am in Adelaide I am not able to call the Ambassador into my office which I would normally do in these circumstances. But instead I have spoken to him on the telephone. And I have made it clear to him that we condemn what has happened and we see this as a real challenge to international security.

I made another point to him too. I made the point to the Ambassador that North Korea is a very poor country - I have been there - a very poor country. It is a country where there is malnutrition in the north for the ordinary people of that

CONFIDENTIAL 7 of 8

CONFIDENTIAL 7 of 8

country and yet they are spending their money on nuclear weapons programmes - on intercontinental ballistic missiles and short and medium-range missile systems. And I said to him that it doesn't seem to make any humanitarian sense to me for a small country like North Korea, in such dire straits, to be dedicating resources to those sorts of purposes. Now, the Ambassador's response was the normal North Korean response - that North Korea is threatened by the United States and that the United States shouldn't threaten North Korea and that the United States was wrong to demand that North Korea should unilaterally disarm its nuclear weapons and so on. But, the fact is, as I explained to him - the United States isn't the issue here, North Korea is a very real threat to international peace and security and we think this is a matter that should be brought to the United Nations Security Council.

JOURNALIST: What sort of response are we likely to see from China?

MR DOWNER: Well it's a good question. I mean, the Prime Minister spoke to Premier Wen about this when he was in China last week and the Chinese of course have been trying to persuade the North Koreans not to test missiles. So, what our view is is that the Chinese should continue to do everything they can, not only to stop the North Koreans from conducting further missile tests - and we think they probably do intend to launch more missiles in the next day or two, but, that the Chinese should do everything they can to persuade the North Koreans to come to the Six-party talks, to get back into

negotiations leading to the abandonment of North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes and obviously their greater involvement in the mainstream affairs of the international community.

JOURNALIST: But how fragile are those talks now?

MR DOWNER: I think they are extremely fragile, and they haven't taken place for quite some time in any case.

Obviously it's important that North Korea abandon this kind of rogue behavior and try to get back into the mainstream of North Asian politics and the broader international community.

JOURNALIST: Minister, what sort of pressure can be brought to bear to try to change North Korea's mind. So few countries seem to have trade relations with North Korea, that's obviously not a strong option, the Security Council have been flouting, something they know that, so where do you go from here?

CONFIDENTIAL 8 of 8

CONFIDENTIAL 8 of 8

MR DOWNER: Well it's not really a matter that's been considered by the Security

Council and obviously if it is considered by the Security Council that constitutes a very serious deterioration in North Korea's relations with the broader international community. I have often said in the past that the country that has the most leverage over North Korea, in so far as anyone does, is China. North Korea depends on China for about half of its international trade and about 70% or 80% of its aid. So, at the end of the day they are very dependant on China and China is a country with the leverage. But in this case I don't doubt China's goodwill- China has been trying to persuade them there's nothing to be gained from conducting these tests and they've gone ahead with it anyway, so we just have to keep up the pressure.

JOURNALIST: Did the North Korean Ambassador actually say (inaudible)?

MR DOWNER: NO. he didn't. He actually said that this was a matter for the military and that he hadn't been really informed about it.

JOURNALIST: But you understand that there is going to be further launches?

MR DOWNER: I think it's possible that there will be further launches, yes. We have information that there may be, not that there will be, but that there may be.

JOURNALIST: How do you expect the United States might react, do you think they might take pre-emptive action?

MR DOWNER: I don't think the United States - the United States position is always that they don't rule in or rule out military action in any circumstances. That's a stock standard United States position and has been for a hundred years. But I don't think the United States is going to take military action in response to this, but I think appropriately they are likely to go to the United Nations Security Council and we certainly urge them to do that.

End text.

OWENS

NNNN